

Russell Mills

Outstanding Teacher 2000/2001

Russell Mills, professor of civil engineering, is recognized as a top teacher in a technical field where it is not always easy to create techniques that encourage student participation. His objective is to “create a learning environment in which most students thrive.” He feels a responsibility as an engineering teacher, noting, “My students are to become engineers on whom public safety would depend.”

Maurice Mow, chair of the Department of Civil Engineering, says, “His repertoire of courses transcends six distinct academic areas, a multitude of different course types (lecture, discussion, laboratory, experiential), at all student levels, from freshman to graduate. There are very few faculty who have demonstrated teaching ability in such a variety of learning environments.”

The steel bridge competition team, for which Mills was faculty adviser until 2000, has brought prestige to the civil engineering department. Chico’s steel bridge team has won the regional competition and qualified for the national event in each of the four previous years. In 2001, building on their past successes, the group was awarded the top prize at the national competition.

This year, Mills received the Presidential Leadership Award. Other awards Mills has received include CSU, Chico Meritorious Performance Award for extracurricular activities, Professional Promise Award for excellence in teaching, recognition from the American Society of Civil Engineers for outstanding service, Engineering Professor of the Year in 1994, Fulbright Scholarship to Mexico, and reviewer for the Fulbright Senior Scholar Program.

Mills received his B.S. in civil engineering from CSU, Chico and his M.S. and Ph.D. in structural engineering from Stanford University